LABOUR MONTHLY

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MAKING CAPITALISM WORK?

Andrew Rothstein

TRADE UNIONS: THE NEXT ROUND

R. Page Arnot
E. Marsden
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FRENCH POLITICS TODAY

Senator Georges Cogniot

BRITISH RACIALISM

Sid Bidwell MP, Tony Gilbert

'Critics of Empire' review by R.P.D.

AUGUST 1969

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Notes of the Month

MAKING CAPITALISM WORK?

> **'The Government . . . had tried to make capitalism work better than the capitalists could, and had come to believe that the workers were getting too much . . . If it were ever to get back into power, it must give up trying to placate the union's enemies and try to placate its friends.'**
>
> FRANK COUSINS at the conference of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Douglas, IOM (reported by *The Times*, July 15, 1969).

July 21, 1969

What a ludicrous spectacle is presented by the comments in the capitalist press on the International Communist Conference which closed in Moscow on June 17! First the long preliminary barrage of 'doubts' whether the Conference could assemble at all, with the hopeful lists of parties who wouldn't come, and the prophecies that any debates would be 'dominated by recent events in Czechoslovakia' (e.g. *Guardian*, May 28). Then the comforting thought—once it was clear that the meeting would take place—that it 'may not bestow much prestige on the Russians,' because 'revolutionary ears are no longer attuned to Moscow at all' (*The Times*, June 2); in fact, the leaders of the Soviet party 'must regret that they have to go through the motions at all' (*Guardian*, June 5).

'Splits Laid Bare . . .'

Then, when the unprecedented debates began—unrestricted by time-limits or formal agenda, each delegation free to hold press conferences and issue texts of its speeches—the period of happy war-dancing over the natural differences in viewpoint shown when parties from all over the world spoke their mind. Incidentally, there were no greater differences than were shown on some basic issues at the sixth Congress of the Communist International, forty years ago, when the capitalist press was given nothing like the present facilities —so when did world communism feel it was stronger, then or now? At all events the headline writers enjoyed themselves: 'Russia is on defensive: Splits laid bare at Communist Conference' (*The Times*, June 9); 'Attack on China harms party, says Ceausescu' (*Telegraph*, June 10); 'Gollan revolt at Communist World Congress' (*Telegraph*, June 13); 'Some things just can't be swept under the table' (*Economist*, June 14), and so on. Speeches criticising the Soviet party's policy were played up, replies to the critics almost entirely ignored.

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But already, at the tail-end of its joyful lecturing of 'the Russians', the *Economist* ground out in an aside that 'the meeting has certainly escaped being swamped in a sea of platitudes.'

. . . But 'Surprising Unity'

The Times correspondent, too, admitted (June 14) that 'the Russians probably feel that the results have not been entirely negative from their point of view'; while *The Observer* man in Moscow (June 15) not only went further in this respect—'turning into a remarkable diplomatic and political success for the Soviet Union'—but (for the first time in the capitalist press) deigned to notice the international unity on 'major problems facing the communist movement' which the Conference had revealed. By June 16 *The Times* correspondent was reporting that 'Communist ideologists from various countries are working against the clock to produce a statement of aims and policies acceptable to all the 75 parties . . . labouring to reconcile scores of amendments with the draft of the main conference document' (a sinister process, of course, totally unknown elsewhere). Three days later (June 19), after doing his best with what reservations there were, he gave his summing-up: the final declaration 'consists mainly of an orthodox communist evaluation of the world situation and the prospect for continuing the struggle against the "imperialists" without provoking a world war,' and 'most of the world's communists are quite content to pursue the courses dictated by their national conditions and interests.' *The Economist* (June 21) thought that 'the Russians have scored a not inconsiderable propaganda victory,' since 61 of the parties signed the conference document without any reservations at all: taking scanty comfort only from the '14 parties that refused to follow the herd.' And *The Observer* (June 22) concluded that 'the agreed public stance of the 75 parties is far from limp,' and (underlining the freedom of debate) found: 'It was not unfair to claim that the conference demonstrated an imperfect but surprising unity.' The operative word here—and throughout the capitalist camp (the other West European press presents the same picture)—was 'surprising'.

The Press Spares its Readers

The main document adopted by the Conference did not receive the benefit of publication by the capitalist newspapers, though one or two gave very shortened versions of what they thought fit for their readers. It began by stating the successes won for world peace by the socialist countries, the international working class, the national liberation struggle and the massive peace movement. Then

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it went on to list the crimes of imperialism and the perils of its aggression in different parts of the world (including its efforts to weaken the unity of the socialist countries). It analysed the causes of these continuing efforts—notably the more and more pronounced feature of state monopoly capitalism. *Will any reader be surprised that this first section was 'overlooked' by the capitalist press?* In the second section, the document went on to explain why the world socialist system has become the *decisive* force in the struggle against imperialism—analysing the economic and political strength of the socialist countries, declaring that 'the defence of socialism is an internationalist duty of communists' and underlining the need, in the building of socialist society after the victorious socialist revolution in many countries, for 'strict adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism, mutual assistance and support, equality, sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.' Divergences between them need not disrupt their united front against imperialism. The section goes on to analyse in great detail the problems of the working class in the citadels of capitalism—'the principal driving force of the revolutionary struggle and of the entire anti-imperialist, democratic movement'—particularly in the communists' struggle for unity with other organisations interested in the renewal of society. But an essential condition for advance in this field is that the organisations favouring socialism should resolutely 'break with the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie.'

The Call to Communists

In the paragraphs supporting the widespread actions of young people nowadays, incensed by the deep-going crisis of contemporary capitalist society, the section calls on communists to propagate in their ranks the ideas of scientific socialism and 'explain the danger of various pseudo-revolutionary ideas.' In a great subsection on the problems of the anti-imperialist movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America, it contrasts the condition of those young states which have taken the non-capitalist path and those which have taken the capitalist road. *Can you be surprised that the capitalist newspapers have 'spared' their readers any intelligible account of this section?* The third section gave a concrete programme of action by communists and all opponents of imperialism, all those 'desiring a positive solution of the major problems worrying mankind today.' This comprised (i) all-round support to the heroic Vietnamese people, (ii) compelling the imperialists to accept the peaceful co-existence of

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states with different social systems, (iii) preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, on the road to their prohibition, (iv) disbandment of Nato and the Warsaw Treaty in favour of an all-European security system, (v) curbing the revenge-seeking forces of West Germany in their various demands, notably by securing the inviolability of existing frontiers in Europe, (vi) united action against local wars and other forms of intervention by imperialism (as in the Middle East and Latin America), (vii) work 'to rid our planet completely of the curse of colonialism,' particularly by international measures to support the patriots in the Portuguese colonies, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, (viii) stepping up the fight against fascism in Greece, Spain, Portugal, West Germany and elsewhere, (ix) a united struggle against racialism in all its forms—in the USA and South Africa, in Rhodesia and in Israel—'the most ignominious phenomenon of our time.' *Only the most cursory references, in a few capitalist newspapers, even noticed the existence of this section!*

Differences—At last!

But in return, when they came to the final section, they all cheerfully stressed that (as noted earlier) fourteen Communist Parties expressed their reservations, a few declining to sign it. The section dealt at length with the need for greater unity in the communist movement—'the most important factor in rallying together all the anti-imperialist forces.' Naturally, while underlining that some delegations (including the British) regarded the section as inadequate for its purpose, the capitalist press as a whole omitted to mention the points on which most were agreed—that 'every Communist Party's national and international responsibilities are indivisible'; that 'the winning of power by the working class and its allies is the greatest contribution which a Communist Party fighting under capitalist conditions can make to the cause of socialism and proletarian internationalism'; that, working out independently in their own specific conditions the ways of transition to socialism or the building of socialism in their own country, Communist Parties should not allow differences on certain questions to hinder concerted international action, 'particularly on the basic problems of the anti-imperialist struggle'; and that those difficulties which had arised between them would be overcome, sooner or later, by 'comradely discussion and consultation and unity of action on the international arena.' While agreeing to differ on several issues the Communist Parties assembled in Moscow refused to honour the pledge of the capitalist press that they were going to split asunder. On the contrary, despite

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the differences mentioned, they regarded the Conference itself as an important success for the international communist movement and for the struggle against imperialism. *One need only ask oneself the question: What would the capitalist press have said if the parties organised in the Socialist International—whose 11th Congress met at Eastbourne in the third week of June, scarcely noticed by the newspapers—while registering their many, far deeper differences, had endorsed such a programme of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist action as that adopted in Moscow?*

Principles of Socialism

In this contrast, and in the consistently anti-imperialist note of unity struck by the International Communist Conference, can be heard the echo of a far-off day in the years when world imperialism was still taking its first steps. At that time the international socialist movement had not yet been eaten away by the corrupting influence of class collaboration within the imperialist framework and its then famous spokesmen dared to say things denounced today as 'communist propaganda'. Thus the great French socialist and anti-militarist leader, Jean Jaurès, in a famous speech in 1898:

> Socialism cannot accept a part of power, it has to wait until it receives power in its entirety. We can co-operate in putting through partial reforms, and we do this. But a party which sets itself the aim of completely transforming society, and replacing the existing principle of property and life by another, can achieve this only by full possession of power. If it possesses only part, it possesses nothing, because this partial influence is neutralised by the principles dominant in present-day society. Our enemy trembles before us, but cannot then be broken: the new ideal is not put into effect, it is only compromised: and though a crisis of capitalism exists, socialism does not inevitably follow.

A few years later, at the Amsterdam Congress of the old Socialist International in August 1904, another French socialist leader Jules Guesde—with whom Marx and Engels had co-operated a quarter of a century before, in drawing up the programme of the French Marxists—took up the story again, this time against Jaurès, who had been converted to the idea of joining in the bourgeois governments which had proclaimed themselves 'Left', or 'Republican', or champions of peace, while leaving capitalism untouched.

Their Class Basis

Socialism was founded on economic phenomena, said Guesde:

> Machine production, concentration of capital, proletarisation of labour, etc., wherever they penetrate, give rise to the same misfortunes and push their

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> victims in millions into one and the same deadly struggle with one and the same enemy. Consequently it is clear that unity of aim, as also of methods and tactics, can exist only on a class basis, however different the states may be.

How could people be defending international peace when they voted the military and naval estimates and those for colonial purposes?

> It is precisely colonial policy, unleashing the contradictory and competing appetites of the capitalist classes of all countries, which represents today the greatest danger to European peace.

Guesde had forgotten his own words by 1914, as Jaurès had ten years before—but those words remained the embodiment of socialist principle, national and international; and the final document of the Moscow Conference carries on the tradition which the Socialist International has long forgotten, or which—when it remembers it—it denounces as 'communist propaganda'. It is with all the more pleasure, therefore, that we welcome this month the important article by Georges Cogniot, in which the French Communist leader shows how alive the Marxist tradition in France is, how effectively it applies the great principles resoundingly restated for today by the Moscow Conference—and how timely is this advice to the French Socialist Party that 'it is not by abandoning class principles and policies, and turning its back on working class unity, that it can safeguard its future.'

The Wilson Policy and Ladywood

Nor does that apply to French socialists alone. It is a biting comment on the real standing of the Labour Government among the thinking workers of other countries that Cogniot, when he writes of the united front of struggle for democracy, socialism and peace, says that it 'should not serve to tie the (French) working class to the tail of the bourgeoisie *to impose on it a policy à la Wilson.*' No, indeed. What the policy à la Wilson leads to has its parallel with the result, for the Socialists, of the French presidential election—in the by-election result at Ladywood, Birmingham, on June 26. This is not a question of percentages. Labour lost 6,500 votes, compared with the general election of March, 1966; Conservatives (reckoning in fascist and crackpot votes as well) went down by over 700; the Liberals gained over 1,500, and their candidate was elected. Even if he took all the 700 votes which the Tory had lost, and another 800 from Labour, the latter still lost 5,700 of its general election supporters. They stayed at home instead of voting; the active rank and file who usually bring voters to the polls did the same; and all twelve

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by-elections which the Labour candidates have lost in the last three years tell the same story, in one form or another—mainly for the benefit of the Tories. 'It is not by abandoning class principles and policies . . .' Of course, it is easy to object that the Labour Government never had any working class *principles*. That is true: but always at general elections the right wing leaders of the Labour Party continue to dress up their *policies* as though, at any rate, they would not injure the interests of the working class. This was enough—at general elections—to secure the uncritical support of many sincere spokesmen of the left wing in the Labour Party.

Right Wing Labour's Real Principles

What such socialists overlook—or they would not allow themselves and the workers to be bamboozled, time and again—is that right-wing Labour has principles, and very definite ones too. They were sketched out by William Morris himself, seventy-five years ago, i.e. in the great years when revolutionary socialists in Britain were fully abreast of their continental comrades in boldly facing the deeper truths of the class struggle. He thought the capitalists—what he called 'the Society of Inequality'—might accept 'quasi-socialist machinery', like more businesslike administration, town planning, free libraries, parks, municipal housing and industry, improved education, etc., even 'at the expense of some portion of the freedom and fortunes of the proprietary classes.' Thereby they might secure the aim of upholding the capitalist system 'in a somewhat shorn condition, maybe, but a safe one': instead of the useless classes being swept away by the useful, 'the useless classes gaining some of the usefulness of the workers, and *so* safeguarding their privilege.' The workers might be 'better treated, better organised, helping to govern themselves, but with no more pretence to equality with the rich, nor any more hope for it than they have now.' Readers can find the full text in Morris's lecture, *Communism*, delivered in 1893 but not published until ten years later in the Fabian Society's *Tracts* (No. 113)—by which time the Fabian Society's leaders considered that William Morris had been safely buried. For from the beginning it was they who had preached just such an 'ideal' to the trade union leaders at whom they were aiming, no less than at the capitalists whom they sought to 'permeate'. With the formation of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900, and still more with the untimely withdrawal from it of the still sectarian Social-Democratic Federation, the following year, the Fabians got their chance. And today 'socialism' à la Wilson is the Fabian principle of 1893, writ large in

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the light of three-quarters of a century's experience. It is the principle of maintaining imperialism at all costs, adapting methods to the situation in a changing world. At all points of the compass this comes through.

Government Against Workers: The Unions

Last month the editor dealt very fully with the fundamental issue raised by the Wilson-Barbara Castle White Paper—the attack on trade unionism under the smoke screen of 'unconstitutional strikes'! It was also dealt with, very faithfully, by a number of trade unionists in the same number. As the journal went to press came the news of the agreement reached on June 18 by the Government and the TUC. More direct echoes of working class experience on the subject will be found in our pages this month, Australian as well as British. It is however, to another aspect—the future of the agreement—that it would be worth while now paying close attention. The Tories, and the class they represent above all, of course denounced the agreement as a 'surrender by Wilson' (*Telegraph* headline, June 19); 'an ignominious climb-down by the Government' (the Tory Shadow Cabinet, ibid.); 'This is not going to get to the root of the problem at all' (a spokesman of the Confederation of British Industry, ibid.); 'The Prime Minister has not got what he asked for' (*The Times* leading article, June 19). And of course all that was quite clear: the decision of the overwhelming majority of the trade unions not to accept any penal legislation against them had forced the Government of the day, as on other first-class issues in the past, to come off its high horse. But *The Times* editorial also looked ahead. 'It is now more than likely that trade union legislation will be passed by a Conservative government,' it said—and there was an immediate echo. The 'transcendent political issue', in Mr. Heath's opinion—wrote *The Times* parliamentary correspondent, obviously after taking his soundings (June 20)—is 'the constitutional impotence of the Labour Government when blocked by its trade union paymasters.' And, the same day, the Tory leader pledged himself on television to alter this situation, directly he got the chance. There will be 'a priority of comprehensive reform of industrial relations when the Conservatives come back to office "in the next Parliament" ' (*The Times* parliamentary correspondent, June 21—under the expressive headline: 'Heath's pledge to bind unions'). The *Economist* crossed all the t's: 'Once a Labour Government had written into the statute book the principle that certain legal action could and should be taken to delay breach-of-contract strikes, the way would probably be easier for the next

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government to start enforcing the ordinary law of contract on trade unions'—and even though Mrs. Castle's original scheme has failed, 'the ground will be prepared for the next government to introduce genuine legal reforms.' Prepared, we may add, in two ways: by supplying, in the course of the long discussions on the White Paper *In Place of Strife*, all the non-class, above-class (and therefore capitalist-class) arguments against the unions which the Tories need —and by steadily disgusting more and more of active Labour Party supporters and voters into the state of apathy on which the Tories calculate, as Ladywood has shown. At this point R. Page Arnot forcibly paints the other side of the picture, to which one may refer the reader.

Government Against Workers: 'Letter of Intent'

Only the general drift of the Labour Government's proposed pledge to the International Monetary Fund, in exchange for a further credit, was available a month ago. The editor summed it up when he said:

> It is clear that Shylock is demanding his pound of flesh. Each time the debtor presents himself anew, the screw is turned tighter . . . Regular as the clock at the duly appointed seasons of the year the bailiff's men politely . . . present themselves in London to conduct their inspection and supervision of Britain's finances and the running of Britain's affairs by the native government just as with any Latin American Republic.

Sure enough, when the terms of Roy Jenkins's Letter of Intent became available, they showed that (i) the Government could only draw $500 million at once, (ii) before it 'purchased' the further similar amount, formally available, it would 'consult with the Fund and reach understanding regarding the circumstances in which such purchases may be made,' (iii) while these 'circumstances' have not yet been defined, missions of the Fund will visit London every three months to establish whether they are satisfactory, (iv) for its part, under paragraph 9 of the letter, the Government commits itself to 'quarter by quarter' control of the planned money supply and of Government borrowing. No wonder Peter Jay, economic editor of *The Times*, pointed out (June 25) that these are precisely the terms laid down 'in the case of the proverbial banana republic arranging a standby in the "fourth credit tranche" (the most beggarly category).' Memories are conveniently short—or he might have recalled that the same terms, imposed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on Egypt, Turkey, Persia and China, not only led to open international interference in their economy but finally to military and naval inter-

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vention, and to foreign occupation, as well. For what kind of 'circumstances' are envisaged by the City journals in Britain itself—never mind the foreigners? Eliminating the 'tinge of anarchy' in Britain's industrial relations—in which process Barbara Castle's Bill 'was an essential part' (*Economist* editorial, June 21). Renouncing import controls or a lower exchange rate for sterling, keeping up the balance of payments to a surplus of at least £300 million in 1969-1970—both promised by Jenkins—and 'to intensify the squeeze on the economy if things go awry, even if unemployment is simultaneously mounting' (*Economist* editorial, June 28). That is to say, taking out another slice of the British people's standard of living. No wonder the Castle scheme was so 'essential'—and no wonder the working class movement must look to its armour in 1969-70 much more vigilantly than it did in 1925-26. All the more because City pundits (e.g. the *Economist* editorial just quoted) are already seeing a possible slowdown in international trade during the coming year, as a result of the monetary squeeze in many countries—and that would mean a new decline in exports, a wider deficit in the balance of payments, and a further squeeze on the money supply at home, 'making unemployment higher still'. Just the point at which a 'vigorous' Tory Government could take over! But what kind of a Labour Government is it that continues such a situation, by insisting on gigantic overseas military expenditure and capital exports? It is a Government for which there is no precedent in socialism—but plenty in the annals of Tory and Liberal imperialism. And, for the measures which its 'squeezes' and 'undertakings' involve against the British people, there is an historic precedent too. No, not only Mr. Wilson's predecessor in this field, Premier James Ramsay MacDonald in 1931. When the Russian people had overthrown the Tsar in March 1917, and were looking forward to the benefits which this could bring—land for the peasants, higher wages and the eight hour day for the workers—the leader of Russian monopoly capitalists, Ryabushinsky, proclaimed the remedy which would bring the 'anarchic' people to heel. It would be 'the bony hand of hunger'. Those literal-minded Russians! They couldn't conceive of a 'squeeze' without explaining whose hand would work it —and whose throat would be squeezed.

Government Against Workers: The Philosophy

Of course Mr. Wilson's Government in its attacks on the trade union rights and living standards of the people, is not really in the classical pose of Ajax single handedly defying the great god Zeus and his lightning. If it were only that, the people would find things easier.

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The Labour right wing entrenched in Downing Street has a powerful bulwark: the capitalist monopolies of Great Britain, with their tentacles spreading (and gathering profit) far out to the uttermost confines of the former British Empire, now the field of neo-colonialism, less developed lands beyond, and even, in a constant world-wide struggle for markets, into the home territories of the other monopoly capitalisms—American, German, Japanese and so forth. At the end of 1967 (the *Board of Trade Journal*, No. 3764, tells us) *private* long-term investments by British firms abroad, were estimated at £11,550 million—of these, £5,300 million in their own daughter companies or allies; and the total is mounting. Twelve years ago in a policy statement headed *Industry and Society*, rightwing Labour leaders swung across their annual conference acceptance of the propositions that the 500 or so largest firms in British industry (accounting then for nearly 50 per cent of the total profits and investments) were now 'substantially underwritten by the state'; that the community ought to have the chance of 'participating' in their 'almost automatic capital gains'; that the big monopolies 'are as a whole serving the nation well'; and that only those firms should be interfered with which are 'falling down on their job' and thus 'seriously failing the nation'. This was the entire philosophy of state co-operation (and even interpenetration, by direct investment) with monopoly capitalism and subordination of the lesser fry to the big fish; and it underlies Labour Government policy today at every turn, whether towards wages, towards the unions, towards the direction of national expenditure or towards the Common Market—to which, Mr. Wilson told the Socialist International on June 16, it is still seeking admission.

Government Against Workers: Common Market

Useful figures have recently emanated from the Ministry of Agriculture, made public by the *Guardian* (July 4) and more than confirmed by a former French Minister of Agriculture, M. Pisani (*The Times*, July 10), about the effect which Britain's entry would have on food prices here. The price of butter would be more than doubled, cheese over 50 per cent, wheat over 80 per cent: these, together with smaller rises in sugar and mutton prices, would bring up the deficit on the balance of payments still higher, by £400 million to £500 million, and add 3½ to 4 per cent to the cost of living. A lively controversy about the significance of these figures broke out at once between the *Guardian* and the *Economist*, which is hellbent on entry ('emotionally attached', are its own words). In the debate, it became clear that the last thing that worried the pro-Market forces was that a large part of

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the British people would have to go back to margarine; what is that, compared with the profits of the big combines in the dairy and margarine industry, with their international alliances? Both sides, however, said as little as possible about the industrial side of entry. Only a few revealing asides crept in, as they always do when such gentry fall out—removal of tariffs between Britain and the six 'would probably at first stimulate our imports more than exports' (*Telegraph*, July 5), i.e. increase unemployment *and* worsen the balance of payments; entry would 'incite Britain to meet international competition by the modernisation and adaptation of its industrial apparatus' (*The Times* account of a Yale professor's findings, July 8)—and anyone who has read Barbara Castle's speeches knows what 'modernisation' by the 500 big monopolies who have been 'serving the nation well' means for the trade unions, while anyone with an elementary knowledge of how big firms absorb smaller ones will understand what 'adaptation' of Britain's industry means; Britain requires a larger market base, 'so that firms can institute large investment projects with a view to selling to the whole area' (*Economist*, July 12)—and which are the firms which can afford such projects? In short, behind the Common Market entry campaign stand the bulk of the great monopolies favoured by right-wing Labour: for them the crowding out, by ruin or absorption, of their smaller competitors, for them a bigger place in the world market from which to jostle and haggle with their foreign rivals, for them the still bigger profits—and if more British people return to margarine and the dole, well, that at any rate will help to temper their 'anarchical' state of mind. One aspect of Labour Government policy ties in with another. Frank Cousins put his finger on the spot when he said at his Union conference on July 14 that the Government 'has tried to make capitalism work better than the capitalists could.'

Strengthening German Imperialism. I

That, of course, is a vain hope. But the Labour Government can do and is doing, a job in preparing the way for a return of the Tories to run British imperialism. And this is no less evident in its diplomacy than in its internal policy. In recent issues *Labour Monthly* has drawn attention to the encouragement given to West German plans for a war of revenge by a joint agreement for development of atomic material and joint plans for a 'first strike' with hydrogen weapons against supposed Soviet aggression. This month has come the offer, announced on July 10, that the West German Luftwaffe may use as many as 20 'surplus' RAF stations as training bases

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and for bombing areas. Then, on July 15, *The Times* defence correspondent reported that 'Britain and West Germany may carry out the joint development and production of the next generation tank gun.' Such co-operation, it should be remembered, has a precedent —in the Chamberlain-Hitler naval agreement of 1935 which in effect set aside the Baltic as a closed theatre for the Nazi fleet, while supposedly leaving the North Sea and Atlantic for unfettered control by the British navy. This encouragement is being given to a Government which almost flaunts its opposition to any real agreement with the USSR and other socialist countries. To the examples given in our pages previously can be added, during the past few weeks, the outcry (*The Times*, June 30) by the West German governing party—the Christian Democrats—against Klaus Schütz, Social-Democratic Mayor of West Berlin, for recommending recognition of the western frontier of Poland, the Oder-Neisse line: one of the essential conditions of the socialist countries for security in Europe. Another example was the intimation during Foreign Minister Brandt's visit to Paris (*Telegraph*, July 5) that 'Bonn is unhappy about France's recently renewed trade agreement with Russia'—of course, because the French Government, after, no less than before, de Gaulle's resignation, continues to declare its belief in the need for relaxation of European tension. Similarly West German Chancellor Kiesinger himself has sought to rally his party for the coming elections on September 28 by holding out the spectre of any alternative government taking decisions in eastern European policy 'of which I would, in the interests of our people, be afraid'—a phrase which *The Times* Bonn correspondent (July 14) obligingly interpreted as meaning that the Opposition might establish relations with the German Democratic Republic. And Kiesinger's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty continues.

Strengthening German Imperialism. II

Nor is it only in its external policy that this Government, clearly (for all but the wilfully blind) preparing for a war of revenge, is receiving aid and comfort from Downing Street. Last month D. N. Pritt's remorseless analysis of the trends in West Germany towards justification of war criminals just had time to draw attention to the latest whitewashing precedent—by making possible the acquittal of men involved in the worst outrages because there was no proof of their having had guilty intentions. Such an exception was not provided for by the warning issued by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin during the war—but already, since Pritt wrote, there have

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been several instances of precisely this kind of trick. The latest has been the refusal of the West German State Prosecutor to bring up for trial Defregger, now Bishop of Munich, exposed by Italian government documents as having direct responsibility for the murder of 17 villagers in June, 1944, by way of reprisal for partisans shooting four soldiers (witnesses say one). At that time Defregger was Intelligence Captain in a Wehrmacht division. All he did, he explained, was to pass on the divisional commander's order to a lieutenant. The State Prosecutor says that this was not shooting 'from base motives': 'he may have believed that the shooting and killing of hostages was justified atonement under martial law, designed to maintain peace, discipline and order in German-occupied territories' (*Telegraph*, July 8). So it was 'manslaughter', not murder; and manslaughter is exempted by the new law amendment, described in Pritt's article; and the Supreme Court of West Germany has already acquitted a man who took part in mass murders of Jews in Poland on this ground; and so Defregger goes free—much to the edification of the many thousands of similar 'manslaughterers' who hold official positions in West Germany, whether or not they adopted Defregger's course of studying 'theology' and becoming a priest in 1949. One more step has been taken towards reconstituting the murder-state which ruled Germany under Hitler. Only an imbecile can imagine that Mr. Wilson's Government keeps silent because it doesn't understand this. Only political innocents can fail to realise that such aiding and abetting of the warmaking machine in West Germany, now bursting out of its 'democratic' trappings at every seam (with the neo-Nazis making the running on the flanks), is as criminally endangering world peace as was the policy of Chamberlain's ultra-Tory Government up to September 1939.

Andrew Rothstein

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

The question of war is, or should be, in the forefront of all our immediate activities. Day by day the evidences of war preparations and war alliances are more and more coming out into the open. Never was there greater need of working-class activity, yet so far as this vital issue is concerned we must frankly face the fact that the workers are almost entirely indifferent. They must be awakened to the seriousness of the war danger.

(From 'Facing the War-Makers', by W. Gallacher, *Labour Monthly*, August 1929.)

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TRADE UNIONS— THE NEXT ROUND (1)

R. Page Arnot

'*THERE is a tide in the affairs of men*'—such as now there is, plain for all to see, with every evidence of it fully visible this year, from early May to early June, from the demonstration strikes to the Special Trades Union Congress of June 5, from the General Council's clash with the Cabinet going on day after day—until the climb down of the obdurate and press-drugged ministers. Now from mid-June to mid-July no ebb in the tide, but still running strongly with strike after strike in the main industries and services: such as Leyland Motors, the docks in Merseyside and Southampton; then in July the railway signalmen; then the London teachers on strike against the largest local authority in Britain, demonstrating to London's County Hall; the Post Office engineers, and, finally looming ahead, a strike of Britain's musicians because of their disgust at the governmental British Broadcasting Corporation expressed not only by their General Secretary but also by the leaders of what has become one of Britain's greatest arts, by Sir Adrian Boult, Yehudi Menuhin and the Master of the Queen's Musick.

The waters had begun to run strongly a year or more ago when the June 1968 Centenary celebrations of the Trades Union Congress came just before the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations (the Donovan Report) followed by the momentous Trades Union Congress of September 1968. The movement of this awakening trade union resistance had indeed set in two years earlier when the great strike of seamen, almost unique for the Seamen's Union, had broken out as the renewed Government (renewed in the embers of the March 1966 general election) had announced an intensified policy of squeeze and repression—as the Labour Government had come out against the labour movement that gave it birth.

Carried along on this tide of thoughts and words and actions by millions of organised workers, the General Council, following the overwhelming vote of the Trades Union Congress of 1968 (and of the Labour Party Conference a month later) against penal legislation, resisted stoutly the Government's pressure. The pressure was terrific, relentless and had behind it the greater pressure of all the monopolies through a thousand agencies and particularly by the

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daily newspaper press with its 25 million doses of poison daily against the few score thousand of the *Morning Star*. Against the press, John Newton, who presided at the June Conference and was now a fraternal delegate to the National Union of Mineworkers in July, very properly made a protest which should be repeated at every trade union branch.

> '*There is a tide in the affairs of men,*
> *Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.*'

It was a victory for the trade union movement which should not be underestimated because it was won at the cost of concessions enforced by government pressure, concessions which many militants thought unnecessary. It was nonetheless a great victory, such a victory in the field of industrial relations as had not been known in this generation since the war. The last time was long before the war when Winston Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, caused a crisis of exports, and the Government and the employers demanded that wages be kept down. Then on a Friday in the last week of July 1925 the Cabinet met with a stiff resistance from the TUC and climbed down. 'Red Friday' marked the defeat of a Tory Government seeking to lay the burden on the working class. This time a Labour Government with similar aims was defeated.

In each case there was that unusual feature of modern life, a clear confrontation between two opposing interests, between the interests of organised labour and the interests of monopoly capitalism. The chief difference was the surprise that many felt that this time too, on a crucial question, a Labour Government represented the needs and claims of a capitalist society. That capitalist society is in competition with and at the same time fully backed by international capitalism, by the Yankee trusts and Nato-attached moneylenders.

If there is a lesson to be learned from the Red Friday parallel, there is also a warning to be borne in mind. The warning is that after Red Friday there was a terrible failure of nerve within the General Council (as well as J. H. Thomas's treachery within it) which led to total collapse in the spring of 1926. What happened then in 1925? They did not follow up their victory. Instead of advancing, the General Council were retreating. They thought they were marking time; but the ground beneath their feet was moving, their opponents were active and they were being left behind.

The danger now for the General Council is marking time instead of advancing all along the line. The danger for the whole working

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class is of marking time while the ground slides away beneath their feet and the other side are active. Hence the one supreme lesson of this victory is to follow it up, not only in the headquarters of each union but first and foremost in each workshop, in each trade union branch, in each district committee.

But this programme of an advance is not only one of instant and effective resistance to the encroaching demands of the capitalists. It means much more. It means encroaching upon them, the masters, with workers' demands. It means that the shop stewards, Fathers of the Chapel, pit delegates, together with local and district secretaries, officials and committee men have to tackle in earnest the necessary, long overdue improvement of union machinery—so that it becomes fully democratic from top to bottom and able to carry out advanced programmes effectively.

Think of the hindrances to the movement as a whole caused by such unions as have mutilated themselves with bans and proscriptions. Think of the multiplicity of unions in one industry which should have been overcome 50 and 60 years ago. Think of the retarding effect upon the best-intentioned officials of the unions.

Above all, and so long as the leading officials are of good intent and can be relied upon so to do as to maintain your support of them, do not allow the further tactics of your retreating opponents to gain any measure of success. Their tactic will be to drive a wedge between elected officials and the rank and file, or between the General Council and constituent unions.

On the contrary make the opponents of trade unionism, and especially of the shop stewards, sorry that they ever thrust these new powers upon the TUC by your resuscitating other powers that have too long lain dormant. Return to the old slogan 'All power to the General Council' and with it such an access of democracy, such a democratic cleansing and spring cleaning of the unions, as will stop any bureaucratic use of this and other slogans or measures.

There are, under the TUC Constitution, 'Duties' of the General Council which will only be fully used—to the benefit not only of the organised workers but the whole people—if they are spurred on, by words and actions, from within their constituent unions which themselves in most cases could be made more democratic (i.e. more responsive to the will of the members) than they have been for these past several years.

But unless that will of the membership is informed, alive to the new opportunity given by the mid-June victory over penal legislation to go forward now on a socialist road for Britain and to the ending

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of wage-slavery, the necessary impetus will not be given with sufficient strength. It can be given: for, in the words put by Shakespeare into the mouth of an ancient Roman:

> '*On such a full sea are we now afloat,*
> *And we must take the current when it serves.*'

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(2)

E. Marsden
General Secretary, Constructional Engineering Union

THE trade union movement finally defeated the efforts of the Government to force legislation with penal clauses on the trade unions. The main factor was the growing opposition from the rank and file in every industry throughout the country with the token stoppages on May 1 and on June 5. Opposition to *In Place of Strife* extended to all sides of the official movement too, including the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and even divisions within the Cabinet itself. This unity, and particularly the unity of the left forces in the Labour Government is an important victory to all who are fighting for progressive changes in Government policy on major industrial and political issues. There can be no doubt that the whole movement breathed a deep sigh of relief at the withdrawal of the threat of penal clauses.

There are differences of opinion amongst the left as to the extent of the victory, but not to recognise that it was a victory is a negative reaction and can cause harm to the future unity of the left, more necessary now than ever. My own personal view, and indeed that of my Union is that the TUC was in a position to completely reject the Government's claims that strikes and industrial relations were in any way responsible for the country's economic problems. It was therefore unfortunate that the Special TUC in Croydon on June 5 supported *Programme for Action* by a very substantial majority, as this tended to lend substance to the Government's case.

The General Council itself when commenting on the number of strikes in industry pointed out that they only led to the loss of one-tenth of 1 per cent of production and compared this to the lost production caused by industrial injuries, sickness or unemployment. It is an undeniable fact that the growth of unemployment since the early 1960s has caused more loss of production than have strikes. The number of working days lost in the UK in 1968 through unem-

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ployment was approximately 146,000,000, as against the number of 4,692,000 days lost through strikes. If we only reduced unemployment to the 1965 level of 360,000 we would save about 58,500,000 working days; this is 12 times as much as all the days lost through strikes in 1968. The trade union movement should insist on a policy of economic expansion, as in fact the TUC itself has demanded, as the basic aim for solving our economic problems.

The big lie technique of blaming the workers and the trade unions for our economic ills, whipped up by the press, has confused some labour and trade union leaders as to the fundamental causes for the continuing economic crisis.

These attitudes maintain an arms expenditure of over £2,000 million per year and an overseas military expenditure of £450 million, including an approximate £80 million cost of keeping troops in West Germany some 25 years after the end of the second world war. We allowed big business in 1968 to send over £600 million abroad to reap super profits at the expense of our own capital development. The Government's policies are basically the same as those carried out by the Tory Government before them and are designed to solve the crisis in the interest of big business.

I am satisfied myself that too many strikes are not the cause of our problems; indeed there is room for the argument that the reverse is true. If anything we suffer from a low wages economy that has allowed our industries to stumble along with too many antiquated factories and machinery that should have been replaced years ago. An article in the *Financial Times* of April 1, 1969, pointed out that 'labour productivity in the UK is generally about two-thirds of that in the European Economic Community and one-third of that in the United States.' It further states: 'Recent wages in the UK are lower than in most EEC countries by about 20 per cent while the United States has wages nearly 2½ times those in the UK.' It is also well known that the American worker has twice the horse-power at his disposal that the British worker has, and Japan today is spending twice as much as us in capital investment, which is bound to bring about a similar situation there.

It seems clear to me that the trade unions have not used enough of their strength to force changes of this kind in Britain, which is really the only way to real increases in productivity and higher living standards. Whilst I do not support strikes for their own sake, one cannot forget that ultimately the strike weapon and negotiations based on it is the only real weapon the working class has, and this should be considered normal in this class-based society of ours.

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The TUC has undertaken in my view an impossible task, and great care will have to be taken to avoid creating difficulties between rank and file workers and their trade unions. *Programme for Action* does give some scope for workers to strengthen their procedures sensibly in their own interests, and in sections 20 to 27 the document makes clear that the TUC has different ideas to many, as to what an unconstitutional strike is; but the main danger as I see it will be the kind of interference that will give aid to the employers.

There will be many occasions in the future as there have been in the past where efforts to hold the workers back will result in their losing the initiative to the employers. The rank and file workers cannot and will not allow that to happen no matter who tries.

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(3)

Bob Wright
Executive Council Member,
Amalgamated Union of Engineering & Foundry Workers

THE York Memorandum (in its present form) was imposed upon the engineering unions in 1922, at a period when the unions were at their weakest. The official title was *Provisions for the Avoidance of Disputes*, although the agreement has done more to perpetuate disputes than to prevent them, inasmuch as the employer is the judge, jury and hangman throughout the procedure; on numerous occasions, due to this fundamental weakness, the unions have had no alternative but to support their members in taking the necessary action to protect their interests. Following the Donovan Report and the Government's abortive attempt to impose legislation which would have restricted the workers' right to defend and advance their conditions, the employers have introduced proposals suggesting numerous changes, presumably a recognition on their part that the York Memorandum is contrary to the Donovan Report and the industry's requirements. They have also to take cognisance of the TUC's *Programme for Action*, and particularly its stress on the *status quo* in Clause 20* and consequential Clauses 21 and 22.

The general tenor of the proposals made by the Engineering Employers' Federation in formal conference with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions was that they are now compelled, by forces of which we are unaware, to re-examine the

* Clause 20 runs: 'Where the dispute arises from an action by management (examples are speed-up of work; dismissal; manning arrangements; redundancy), it is only where the procedure covers these points, and incorporates a *status quo* provision, and where there has been a failure to agree within the machinery at that stage, that a stoppage can properly be described as unconstitutional.'

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industry's existing machinery at national (in terms of negotiating procedures) and, also, at domestic, local and disputes machinery levels. Some of their proposals could be regarded as positive—taken in isolation—but, in total, offer the minimum movement towards equity it is possible to get in our industry at this stage. Therefore, the Confederation would be wise to, and I am sure will, completely reject these proposals in their present form.

The employers suggest relating local problems to machinery which terminates in the locality, but wish to have an assurance that those cases likely to lead to dispute may be taken up nationally at a further stage between the unions and the Federation. They also recognise the need to establish national joint machinery, covering both staff and manual workers, to deal in a statutory sense with all outstanding claims, either in concert or individually. This means that, for the first time, there are suggestions at national level, that the existing *ad hoc* form of negotiating procedure, so heavily criticised by a court of inquiry in 1952, by unions and other outside authorities, for the length of time and lack of positive negotiating facilities attending national negotiations, should be amended. It is amazing that the unions have tolerantly allowed, on each successive national claim, an average of fourteen months to elapse before conclusion by agreement is reached, and this period has never been accompanied by retrospective payment.

The employers suggest agreed circumstances wherein they would have a voice in the number of shop stewards—with conditions attached, period of service and agreement on joint sectional elections of stewards, incorporating a number of unions. On this issue, the Confederation has determined—and all unions concerned made it clear—that they continue to reserve the right to determine the election of a shop steward to represent their members in a section or department, based on the constitution of that union, and only where the unions decide the necessity for a joint shop steward will this be permitted. A further proposal is that there should be a time limit on the negotiating machinery; there is no dispute between us here!

Let me now turn to the points which the trade unions are intent on establishing with the employers. The principles we have always held are, indeed, in line with the above TUC statement on *status quo*, and *status quo* means that, on any issue affecting the workers' interests, the employer cannot introduce changes without the prior agreement of the trade union(s) concerned, or until the procedure is exhausted. Therefore, with regard to manning, class of labour, piecework values, method changes, redundancy and, we believe, on disciplinary issues,

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we feel these must be the subject of negotiation and agreement, and that the employer should not be free to act until agreement has been reached or the procedure exhausted. At that stage, the unions would be free to defend their interests, if so inclined.

We must, however, recognise that, if our members, shop stewards or the union, were proposing changes in existing conditions or wages, the provisions of the procedure must similarly be observed prior to imposing any action, but they would be free to do so in the event agreement could not be reached.

The unions believe the machinery should be along the lines suggested by the employers, and of such character that issues will be dealt with—unless otherwise mutually agreed—with a time limit applying, both to domestic and local negotiations, and terminating at local level on issues which are only of interest to the individual employer concerned in the particular problem.

Other issues affecting national policies, either of the unions or employers, should be the subject of a third stage of procedure—at a central conference between executives and local representatives of the union and similar management representation.

At all stages of the procedure, adequate representation should be present at those negotiations, including national conferences. We also wish to establish adequate machinery at national level—possibly on a national council basis—with equal representation, for dealing with the industry's general negotiations. This body should have a statutory constitution, with meetings enabling both parties to table their proposals prior to such meetings.

One of the fundamental issues needing recognition is that, upon reaching agreement, retrospective effect of that agreement should be accepted on most issues negotiable at national level. This would clearly indicate a willingness by both sides to recognise that delays in the machinery should not lead to a loss, by the workers, of the advantages gained. Many aspects need to be ironed out in an industry so complex as that of engineering, but clearly the need for such machinery has long existed.

Many other problems need to be faced. One which may cut across the thinking of various unions is the issue of greater authority and power to organise shop stewards' movements, either on a factory or group basis. There is no doubt that many large combines are now, in fact, not allowing local managements to resolve problems because of combine and group policy and the centralised policies they operate. This can be a source of conflict and we must re-examine the type of representation essential in these circumstances. The issue of manager-

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ial functions and the freedom to hire and fire is fundamental to the growth of industrial democracy and it must no longer be accepted that employers have complete liberty to determine recruitment policies, hiring of labour (often for reasons which are suspect) and, more important, termination of employment, which is so often challenged by the unions, particularly relating to redundancy. Such policies must become the subject of mutual understanding.

May I conclude by indicating that the issues confronting us in the coming negotiations to obtain a new procedure giving the trade unions equal power, form an essential basis for the growth of industrial democracy in this country. I believe the TUC proposals, coupled with the current thinking of my union—and most of the unions in the Confederation—need the active support of the rank and file and, particularly, the shop stewards' movement, in order that they can reach fruition. Every effort must be made to organise support for these proposals and to propagate the importance of establishing this development towards industrial democracy.

THEATRE

'Arturo Ui' Amelia Bayntun

IN *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Saville Theatre, London) Bertolt Brecht draws a comparison showing how Hitler and his henchmen resembled the American gangster Al Capone and his gang. Arturo Ui's (Hitler's) easy rise to power through murder and political manoeuvre, the way being paved by weaklings in high office, is Brecht's theme and he draws out with masterly strokes the ironically evil situation coupled with the uproariously comic aspect of the man. I doubt if anyone else could portray comedy and evil side by side so well. It makes wonderfully good theatre.

Leonard Rossiter as Arturo Ui unwinds the character with a most skilful and unassuming artistry. From a hump backed, bent kneed, almost snivellingly weak leader he gradually grows into a fanatical, towering, ruthless, tempestuous ruler and yet never really loses that inner weakness. A performance which carries the evening to great heights. This is creative acting at its very best. The rest of the cast, noticeably well disciplined, muster round him in unison, like a pyramid in support. There are several very notable performances, among them David Bird as the actor, and David Graham as Givola.

Brecht's plays usually move along swiftly and this one is no exception. The ever changing scenes—extremely well done—keep something new constantly before us. Shops, offices, a graveyard, a court, a garage, a billiard room, streets in which we witness blood, fire, plotting, murder, a funeral and public meetings. The most hilarious scene takes place when a broken-down Shakespearian actor endeavours to teach Ui deportment.

We are lucky to have this Brecht play in the heart of theatreland. My advice is to see it now and not regret having missed it. I shall go again.

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BLIND NO LONGER A BURDEN

DAILY WORKER

ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN (SECTION OF COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL)

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1934

THAELMANN TRIAL TO B

Hitler Selects Court To Try Communist Leaders

CALL FOR BRITISH WORKERS TO ACT NOW TO SAVE THEM FROM FASCIST EXECUTIONER

ERNST TORGLER

ERNST THAELMANN

Labour Party's Electoral Window Dressing

NEW HOUSE POLICY TO CATCH VOTES

THE long-threatened trial of Ernst Thaelmann, leader of the German Communist Party, and Ernst Torgler, leader of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, is at last to be staged before Hitler's specially-created "People's Court."

THIS NEWS MUST BE TAKEN AS AN ALARM SIGNAL TO THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT OF BRITAIN TO ACT IMMEDIATELY TO SAVE THESE VALIANT COMRADES FROM THE PERIL OF DEATH.

The penalty for the charge of "high treason" is death. The composition of the "People's Court," as stated above, makes it certain that Thaelmann and Torgler will be summarily handed over to the executioner, unless the hands of the Fascist murderers are stayed.

Immediate steps are being taken by the London District Committee of the Communist Party and the International Labour Defence. The position will be raised at all meetings held to-day.

ON SATURDAY A DEMONSTRATION WILL BE HELD IN CENTRAL LONDON. DETAILS WILL BE PUBLISHED TO-MORROW. ALL COMRADES ARE CALLED UPON TO STAND IN READINESS.

(See Leading Article on page 2).

Miners Greet Pollitt-Mann Acquittal

THE FIGHT TO FREE THAELMANN

HIT

Daily Worker pages, from July 13 and July 7, 1934, bring alive German (and British) workers' resistance to Hitler's rise.

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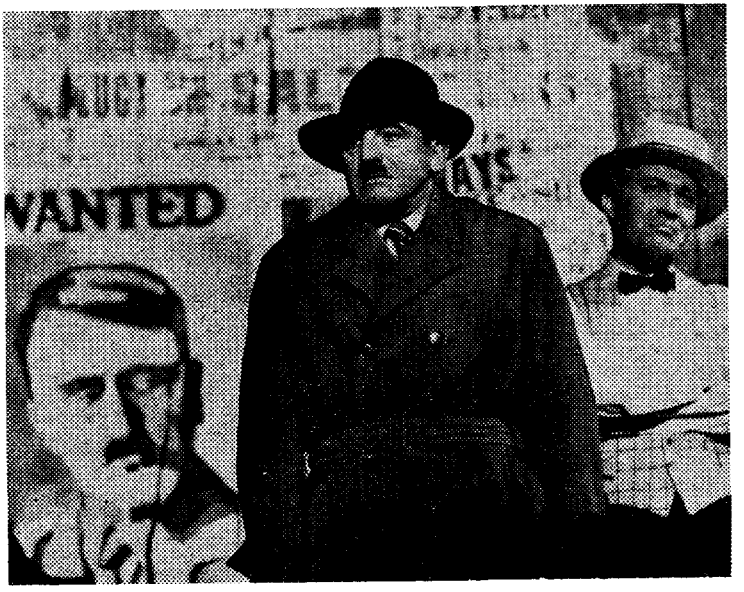

Leonard Rossiter in the Nottingham Playhouse production of Bertolt Brecht's 'The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui' at the Saville Theatre, London

(See Amelia Bayntun's review on page 359)

DAILY WORKER
—THE GUNMAN OF BIG BUSINESS
THYSSEN—THE BIG BUSINESS WIRE-PULLER BEHIND HITLER
How A German Factory Looks Under Hitler
WAGES FALL AND PROFITS RISE
COLLAPSE OF GERMAN TRADE UNDER HITLERISM
One Of Reasons For Brownshirt Massacre

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FRENCH POLITICS TODAY

Senator Georges Cogniot

THIS recent work* by a professor of the University of California is particularly disappointing. True, the author recognises that 'the Communist Party had finally made the French republican tradition its own' (p. 234), thanks to the struggles which it kept up for the anti-fascist People's Front from 1934 to 1938. He admits that 'the Communist Party had fused most successfully the ideals of proletarian revolution and Jacobin republicanism' (p. 246). But at no time does he make the least attempt to *analyse* the new Jacobinism of the Communists, whether by referring to the celebrated remarks of Lenin on the question, or by recalling the well-known observations of Maurice Thorez on the fidelity of the French Communists to the heritage of the revolutionary 18th century—for example in his speech at the 7th Congress of the Communist International in 1935 and in his report to the 8th National Congress of the French Communist Party in January 1936. All these texts seem not to exist for Prof. Brower: a singular method of procedure for a professional historian!

In general, the author's method is one of pure description and narrative. He does not go beneath the surface. You would look in vain for any study of the nature of the People's Front as an alliance of several classes, a fighting alliance between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie in town and country—the middle classes equally interested in the defeat of fascism. Fascism itself is not analysed in its class content.

All communist statements on these questions have been completely neglected and ignored. In nine cases out of ten, Prof. Brower relies upon non-communist, or more precisely anti-communist, sources. He has a marked preference for the 'evidence' of renegades and others expelled from the Communist Party, even those most discredited, whom he quotes with blind confidence without ever putting the question of their authenticity or partisanship. This historian completely forgets the most elementary requirements of critical evaluation of evidence. It is comic to see, for example, with what zeal he exploits the assertions of a representative of the French Communist Party in the Executive Committee of the Communist International when it is a case of a man who subsequently betrayed his Party (A. Vassart), while during the Professor's long stay in

* *The New Jacobins*, Daniel R. Brower. *Cornell University Press*, 266 pp., 76s.

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Paris he carefully abstained from interviewing the writer of these lines, although the latter had performed the same functions for a period which falls fully within the scope of this book.

Instead of proceeding to a serious study of facts, deeds and motives, Prof. Brower brings forward at every moment, to explain everything, the hand of Moscow. All the French Communist Party does is to obey. The author simply disposes by sleight-of-hand of situations when the French Communist Party and the Communist International were in dispute, as for example in October 1934, when the International delegated Palmiro Togliatti to Paris to advise Maurice Thorez—*in vain*—not to make his speech at Nantes in favour of the People's Front. Mr. Brower is absolutely incapable of understanding that, in the Communist International, the circulation of ideas and initiatives proceeded in *both* directions—not only from the centre to the circumference but also from the circumference to the centre. He substitutes mythology for history, and puppets for actors.

From the author's point of view, the French people must supposedly possess an extraordinary dose of stupidity to have made this Communist Party, with its actions allegedly controlled by strings pulled from abroad, into a great national party of the people. Yet the moral and political authority of the Communist Party emerges more clearly than ever from the recent presidential election.

With over 4,800,000 votes, that is with more than 21 per cent of all votes cast, the French Communist Party has won a great success in a poll which was particularly difficult for it in this case, since the election of a Communist to the post of Head of State naturally seemed much less credible to the masses than the election of a Communist as deputy to parliament or as mayor of a city.

The Communist Party showed itself as the one organised force of the opposition. Its undeniable and universally recognised success was due, on the one hand, to its concrete programme, which answered to the aspirations of the working people and indicated the precise conditions for a progressive policy, and on the other hand to its efforts for unity, that is to say on this occasion for the nomination of a single candidate of the left. The personality of the Communist candidate—Jacques Duclos, that upright and faithful old fighter—also played a positive part. Prof. Brower says all the bad things he can about Jacques Duclos, but the French people—on the contrary—have the highest opinion of him.

The Socialist Party, in spite of having appealed for the help of a politician dear to Prof. Brower, and one who willingly plays the

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part of 'the man of Providence'—M. Pierre Mendès-France—gathered only 5 per cent of the votes. This was the biggest electoral defeat it had ever suffered. It is paying for its political errors. After having agreed to a certain closer contact with the Communist Party, it refused in effect any agreement on a common programme: and this refusal was one of the principal reasons why the powerful strike movement of May-June 1968, with its nine million participants, did not at that time produce a favourable outcome in the political field.

This same refusal prevented the presence of a common candidate of the left in the presidential election which followed the reverse inflicted on General de Gaulle at the referendum of April 27 this year. The electors have passed a severe judgment on the attitude of the Socialist Party. Its heavy losses in votes and prestige should teach this party that it is not by abandoning class principles and policies, and turning its back on working class unity, that it can safeguard its future.*

As for the 'leftist' candidates, they secured a tiny vote, reaping the fruits of their adventurist attitudes and their anti-communism. The support of a large section of the bourgeois press did not save them.

Big capital had two candidates at its disposal, Messrs. Poher and Pompidou; the French bourgeoisie is well known for its skill and adroitness! It has long dreamed of creating, side by side with Gaullism, a second big bourgeois party, with the object of establishing a bipartisan system based on that of the United States. The two bourgeois candidates, who seemed to be fighting each other but in reality were two political cousins, only representing two varieties of reaction, also secured votes from the people, arising in great measure from the division of the forces of the left, and in consequence from the absence of any prospect of an effective left.

In virtue of the present electoral law, only these two candidates remained for the second ballot. The Communist Party thereupon called for abstention—a difficult decision, since Communist voters are absolutely unaccustomed to abstaining. The capitalist press said that it was a 'false manoeuvre' and a 'grave error'.

Nevertheless the second ballot underlined the Communist success.

* Editorial note: After this article was written, the Congress of the French Socialist Party at Issy-les-Moulineaux on July 14 adopted by a large majority a resolution (i) excluding any alliance with 'the political forces of capitalism', (ii) authorising participation in government only if it ensures an advance to socialism, (iii) calling for an open debate, without preliminary conditions, with the Communist Party about 'the forms of struggle against capitalism, the road for transition to socialism, and the basis of socialist society'.

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The abstentions, which had numbered 5 million at the presidential election of 1965, rose this time to over 10 million. In round numbers, one elector in three did not vote. The new Head of State, Georges Pompidou, received only 37 per cent of the votes of the total electorate; this cut-price President cannot boast of having behind him the votes of the majority of the French people. The mass basis of the power of the big bourgeoisie has been reduced.

The progress made by the Communist Party is evidence of the increased possibilities of uniting the working class and the democratic forces in action against the monopolies. Nevertheless, the battle for unity necessarily involves the denunciation of opportunist ideas, all the more essentially because many new elements—for example uprooted peasants—are entering the ranks of the working class in a state of mind open to permeation either by right-wing reformism or by leftism.

The battle for the engineers and technicians, in general for the intellectuals, has now become of the highest importance. Communist influence among the students has grown markedly stronger in recent months.

The Communist Party regards as a matter of principle a united front with the Socialist Party to establish a regime of advanced and innovating democracy, which would open the way to the building of socialism. The united front must never serve to tie the working class to the tail of the bourgeoisie, making it follow a Wilson policy.

None of the problems facing the country has been solved. Great struggles are looming ahead. The French Communist Party, which has enrolled 35,000 new members, most of them young people, in the first six months of 1969, continues energetically its democratic and revolutionary fight.

For all its defects, Prof. Brower's book rightly suggests that our Party is the heir of an authentic current in French thought. But if the French Communist Party has in reality become the recognised vanguard of the working class and of the people, one of the reasons is that, while always seeking its own and original forms of action as a *national* party, while always taking up again the great political and moral heritage of the *French* revolutionaries, it has for an entire period of its existence had the invaluable benefit of membership of the Communist International founded by Lenin, it has been inspired by the existence and the experience of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Prof. Brower speaks in this connection of commands and tyranny: it was really a matter of education and fertilisation.

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BRITISH RACIALISM (1)

Sid Bidwell, M.P.

IN a sense, colour discrimination and other less seen forms of racialism in this country transcend normal concepts of class barrier and class exploitation. In another sense it is easy to see all the deficiencies of capitalist 'civilisation' at work making full use of racialism: hence Powellism.

In the black-brown-white conflict here, there is no new language code which does not remind us of Nazi-Mosley anti-Jew propaganda and activity. Read the fascist race literature now! Substitute Jew for coloured and it is the same half lie and blatant lie.

Those who peddle a supreme lie: alleging skin pigment and ethnic origin as a major factor determining some sub-standard behaviour have to falsify further. All racialists are habitual liars. Hear them describe occasions when there has been a fracas. Two or three coloured people become hordes.

In parliament some Tory MPs are better on this than a lot of Labour MPs. On the other hand there is no Labour MP who makes a fetish of hostile race and immigration questions.

It is no accident that Powell and his cohorts are reactionary on all other matters: economics, rents and housing, trade union shackles and so on. If Powell is more realistic on east of Suez military presence than Heath, it is certainly not because he is less 'Blimpish'. Today Heath has less working-class support than Powell. He stimulates the 'lumps' and backward elements. It is easier to stir them in a period of mass disappointment with a Labour Government. Division is needed and easy to create.

The Rt. Hon. Enoch Powell, former front bench Tory, to all fascist-racialists in odd corners is the best bet as a leading name. Although they badly need him, there is little sign that he needs them or that he goes beyond receiving their congratulations. But he does not seem embarrassed by their attention.

The National Front (an amalgamation of the old British National Party and the League of Empire Loyalists) has shown signs of organised disruption leading to violence at meetings. Happily they show all habitual signs of splitting.

The fine work of students, trade unionists, real Christians and socialist-communists on friendship councils or community-relations helps enormously. Not least important is leadership of immigrant workers and their preparedness to encourage full participation in

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all working-class political activity. Already many coloured workers are winning spurs as shop-stewards. When such comrades are able to lead all types of workers we are sailing, and weak Powellism can be snuffed out at birth.

However, in the present political climate calling for maximum socialist unity, the need for vigilant determination to smash fascism is as important as in the days when I 'cut my teeth'in struggle against the Mosley blackshirts in the East End of London who were chanting 'The Yids! We've got to get rid of the Yids!' That seems only yesterday.

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(2) Tony Gilbert

THURSDAY, May 1, was a wonderful day. Thousands were striking and marching to keep their unions free. Among them were many West Indian and Pakistani building workers. Dockers and Smithfield meat porters were at the head of the march and with them were men who, it seemed only yesterday, stopped work and demonstrated in support of Powell's ideas.

Is it enough to believe that united action such as this will defeat racialism, or that in struggle workers learn more quickly who the real enemy is? We need to ask, is it sufficiently understood that racialist ideas have deep roots in our country? Reactionaries of the Powell ilk are well aware that these ideas are their weapon to confuse and distract militants. They will use these ideas with even greater vigour as capitalism's difficulties increase.

Many trade unionists began to appreciate the depth of racialist ideas in the early 'fifties. It was not easy to accept, for we were rightly proud of our movement's record of national and international solidarity. Too many equated racialism with fascism. Shop stewards when they met with opposition to West Indian or African labour said: 'Our men aren't fascists. It's the fear of unemployment and the effect on wages that is the cause of their feelings about colour.'

This often led to either an outright colour bar, or only the most menial and low paid jobs being made available to immigrants. At a large London rail depot where the management were desperately short of guards the men's representatives were asked to accept a number of West Indians for training. After a row the men agreed but insisted that West Indian guards should take their turns in manning the royal train. The management promptly dropped its

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request. At King's Cross goods yard during the same period there was a stoppage when one African was hired as a goods porter. In many places the colour bar has been defeated, but such thinking and action dies hard. Today, when villains are showing their determination to use the weapon of racialism to the full, we cannot allow them the initiative.

The tradition of our trade unions fits its members for the task of combating and defeating racialism. Our trade unions came into being to defend working men, women and children against the vicious conditions imposed by the capitalists. Our class was considered to be less than human and the most courageous and able were forced to organise and fight back. A section of our working class (with dark skins) is the target for a special sort of victimisation today.

A short time ago I was spending an evening with a West Indian family and their friends. The host and his wife are communists and he is the convener in a North London factory. The conversation turned to problems of factory life in general, and to racialism in practice. A West Indian engineer said that once, standing quietly in a bus queue, he took out his pocket watch and was pounced on by two detectives. They demanded to know where he got the watch from and searched him. The experiences poured out, and the cockney voice of one of their children, a lad of 16, joined in: 'We don't joke at street corners because if we do we are taken down to the nick and roughed up.' A startled father asked: 'Has this happened to you?' and, when the son answered 'Yes', 'Why didn't you tell me?' His son's reply was: 'What would you do—go down to the nick and get the same?' Listening to him, I was reminded of an occurrence in the playground of an Islington comprehensive school. In the playground, a few days after Powell's first speech, white schoolboys chased Pakistani lads with detergent sprays.

Are these isolated cases? No. Every community relations officer has a thick file of similar and more horrifying stories. Racialism is not an abstract thing. It is being practised by people today. Immigration and police authorities do their share of the practising. The situation calls for a recognition that the battle against racialism is, for us in Britain now, an important part of our class struggle.

On factory floor, in trade union branches and in dockyards racialist ideas must be opposed. This opposition must be organised and trade unionists should link up with those already in the field doing the practical work. The strength and ability of the trade unions, working alongside the local organisations, can be decisive.

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An end can be put to the harassment and victimisation of a section of our working people. Only then, will we halt the retreat Wilson, Crossman, Rees and Co. continually make from rabid racialists.

To those who would agree that the struggle against racialism is necessary, but say that to raise it at work or in a union branch would release dormant feelings of racialism which would isolate them, I suggest there are other points to consider. The dangers to our movement stemming from Powellism are too great for any of us to remain silent onlookers. If not us, who is to defend a section of our working class suffering from economic, social and political victimisation?

Would there be isolation? Every trade unionist who has consistently stood firm against the colour bar has found the opposite to be true. Their attitude meant opposing racialist ideas and as a result their position and the level of political understanding of their fellow workers were enhanced. The actions of politicians and union officials have a tremendous influence on the mood and the ability of workers to struggle. Our workers have seen many great talkers and good negotiators reach high places and too often become enemies in the day-to-day struggle. Whether workers say so or not, life's experiences force them to question the motives of those among them today who stand in the forefront of the wages struggle and the battle of ideas. They need and want leaders of principle.

The struggle against racialism is just such a principle.

Towards the Lenin Centenary

Lenin on Critics of 'Dogmatic Marxism'

What a peculiar quality this 'dogmatic Marxism' possesses! For many years now scientists and very learned people in Europe have been gravely declaring (and newspaper scribes and journalists have been repeating it over and over again) that Marxism has been jolted from its positions by 'criticism', and yet every new critic starts from the beginning, all over again, to bombard these allegedly destroyed positions . . . Now, surely, no one will ever be able to find the remnants of 'dogmatic Marxism', which lies crushed to death beneath this mountain of critical printed matter.

Lenin, in *The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'*, June-September, 1901.
(*Collected Works*, English edition, Vol. 5, p. 107.)

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BRITAIN AND GREEK FASCISM

Helen M. Borrows

THE people of Greece and their plight have long been an object of my concern, but recently I have had an experience which prompted me to greater action and to urge others to the same.

Three seamen were arrested in Greece in June for distributing anti-fascist leaflets; my husband was one. I flew to Greece to attend their trial, which, fortunately, never took place.

Athens is a beautiful city, and to the unaware tourist everything would appear rosy; but the picture I got was of a very different nature. The people of Greece are not happy. They are terrorised by the fascist colonels—their unbelievable cruelty and complete disregard of all human rights. It is not hard to credit the recent reports of torture, and other more subtle forms of cruelty, made by Greek patriots in various parts of the world, once one has seen these men who 'operate' in the Bouboulinas Street Asphalia (police station). The conditions under which the three were held were disgusting: cells 6ft. × 8ft. with nothing to lie or sit on, no washing facilities, unbearably hot or cold to the same degree, no lighting in the cell where my husband was held; a hole in the floor sufficed as a toilet, and food had to be paid for. Five women were also being held there; an unconscious man who had obviously been severely beaten was left on the floor outside their cells—apparently to demonstrate what would be done to them.

However, they were fortunate in that they were only held for three days under these conditions and no physical maltreatment was inflicted upon them. There are many patriots in Greece suffering under similar and worse conditions. One hundred and thirty-seven women are detained in the Alikarnasos Camp on the island of Crete—this is believed to be the only women's concentration camp in the world; 1,684 men are detained in isolation and deplorable conditions on the island of Leros—all without trial or formal charge. In many cases both parents of children are held. Some of these children are cared for by aged grandparents or neighbours, some of them are also held in camps and forced by various methods to denounce their parents and to praise the Government.

Many trade unionists are held in the prisons and camps; the dictatorship has dissolved many of the workers' organisations and most of the elected administrations. International agreements,

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especially those concerned with workers' rights and freedoms, are ignored. The eight-hour day, only recently gained in some trades, has been abolished by the extension of compulsory overtime. It is a fact common to all camps and prisons that political prisoners receive worse treatment than criminal offenders.

Prisoners tried by the courts martial set up by the Junta receive severe sentences for pathetic so-called 'crimes', for example five years for chalking 'Down with the dictators' on a wall. Freedom of the press in Greece is non-existent; Brigadier Pattakos (Greek Minister of the Interior) told delegates of the International Federation of Journalists in 1967 that press freedom would be restored 'when we think fit'. He also announced that the Government was too busy to contemplate elections in the near future. This man has assured foreigners that the Junta do not care what private individuals think of them; he declared on one occasion, when told that if allegations of torture in Greece were not disproved they must face expulsion from the Council of Europe: 'Let them throw us out.' But he and his colleagues are less indifferent than they pretend. They are careful to display only their 'more famous' prisoners who have not suffered torture, and allow small concessions to local press. In the House of Lords on June 7, 1967, Lord Chalfont stated that the Labour Government 'was ready to think again' if the Greek Government did not keep to their promise of a return to democratic rule: they are allowing rather a long time for action on this promise!

In the streets, where I was constantly followed, the people's fear is very apparent towards the uniformed police. There seem to be several different forms of these, both military and civil. On reflection and comparison of experiences, we found that the uniformed guard in the Bouboulinas were all immaculately dressed, handsome, fair young men, and the prisoners were the darker swarthy Greeks.

The British Institute of Military Studies reported in 1968 that Greece is in fourth place for military expenditure, compared with national income, and holds third place, compared with population, in the world. Military expenditure increased by 10 per cent in 1968 compared with 1967 and still increases. In December 1968, Odysseus Angelis was made Commander-in-Chief over all the armed services, a position previously held by a monarch. The army thus becomes all powerful, and simultaneously the Ministerial Council was deprived of its right to intervene in military matters. In all the interrogation rooms where I was taken they have photographs of King Constantine and Queen Anna-Marie either side of the April 21 symbol

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(date of the military coup in 1967) of the soldier enclosed in wings (which appears on matchboxes and posters everywhere); these apparently were all taken down when the Junta took over but soon reappeared. Constantine and his family were recently in Britain—a fact which seems to have been conveniently overlooked by the press.

The situation in Greece is deplorable in this so-called 'civilised' world, but what is worse is the continuing support the Junta enjoys from many of Britain's big industrial combines. ICI recently sold a chemical process to the Greeks; Hawker Siddeley have chartered a large aircraft to Olympic Airways (Greece). British Petroleum (in whose employ the three were when arrested and who have since banned them) are sending their tankers to Greece to undergo repairs whilst there are shipyards standing idle at home. Austin Pickersgill and Bartrams, the Sunderland shipbuilders, are building liberty ship replacements almost solely for Greek owners; Niarchos's Hellenic Shipyards also builds them under licence from the Wearside designers. Reginald Maudling owns shipping and industrial holdings who control Clarksons (one of the largest travel agents in Britain), one of the few agents who handle travel to Greece and are planning tours of the Greek islands in 1970 on ships chartered from a Greek company. They are also the agents for much of the incoming trade from Greece.

United City Merchants, a leading London export-import company, has been frantically trying to place 40,000 tons of Greek tobacco on the British market to help pay for a nuclear power plant the Greek Government wants to buy. The Greek Minister of Economic Co-ordination, Mr. Makarezos, hailed 'the clear promise of assistance by the British Government to solve the difficulties in placing Greek tobacco in the UK' (*The Times*, June 23, 1969). President of the Board of Trade Anthony Crosland was able to report in the Commons on June 18 that exports to Greece for the first five months of the year were up 43 per cent over the same period in 1968.

Let us all in every way possible, as aware and compassionate human beings, do whatever we can to secure the immediate expulsion of Greece from the Council of Europe (from which Spain and Portugal are excluded as fascist controlled countries with no place in a democratic organisation) and to hasten the downfall of the fascist colonels and their 'reign of terror' over the Greek people. Greece in her present state is a centre for experiment in fascist principles; therefore a blow struck here is a blow to fascism the world over.

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Higher Education Curricula

THE NEEDS OF CAPITALISM

Donald Cameron
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UNIVERSITIES were first set up to train the administrators, executives and technologists serving the ruling class in feudal times. Now, though the feudal rulers who trained and used the clergy for this purpose have given way to the bourgeois ruling class, the role of the university remains the same. Those in whose hands the running of the capitalist state is entrusted are almost all educated at our universities. This includes the administrative class of the civil service, most of the scientific and technical civil servants, most of the senior local government officers in the larger towns and counties, many of the officers of the armed services, almost all judges, barristers, advocates and solicitors, much of management and the technologists of industry, and many of the ordinary professional people in our society—doctors, dentists, veterinarians, engineers, chemists, physicists, university and school-teachers, newspaper editors and journalists and television and radio producers. To maintain the machinery of the capitalist state in smooth running order, it is important, from the point of view of the ruling class, that these people are exposed to a reliable bourgeois ideology. This is to ensure that, no matter what class they originate from, they will, after three or four years, particularly if they are academically successful, writing good essays and dissertations and scoring well in their examinations, end up with a suitable ruling class consciousness.

The Robbins report puts it this way: 'We believe that it is a proper function of higher education, as of education in schools, to provide in partnership with the family that background of culture and social habit upon which a healthy society depends.' If one remembers that Lord Robbins is chairman of the *Financial Times* one can readily imagine the meanings of 'culture and social habit' and 'healthy society' that were intended.

A perusal of the courses offered by British universities shows that, as Willie Thompson suggests (*LM*, June 1969), they are biased against working class studies. Attendance at classes reinforces this

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impression, for, of course, what appears as 'philosophy' in a syllabus is seldom Marxism, and even when Marxism is discussed it is usually by anti-Marxist teachers. Similarly, history, economics and sociology often have a marked anti-working class bias.

In the technological training for medicine, dentistry and social work the emphasis is on the treatment of individuals who have already broken down in health or who otherwise do not measure up to the norms of bourgeois society. Prevention, by the elimination of poverty, unemployment, bad housing, lack of amenity and lack of education, and dangerous and poisonous industrial processes does not get the attention it deserves. Capitalism cannot afford to have doctors and social workers who seriously indict the system.

Even in more purely scientific subjects the philosophies that prevail are not those of the working class. An objectivity is encouraged which, when translated to social affairs, places all classes on an equal footing, but more dangerous still there is a school which encourages students to ignore the primacy of humanity and to put man on a plane with other animal species, even with machines.

All this means there must be a change in the content of curricula. There must also be a change in the manner of presentation of a kind that has been going on in many courses in universities up and down the country. Set lectures should become a minor part of teaching, and classes where students themselves do most of the work by preparing essays and leading discussion should be the most important part of the learning process. Lectures, in placing a single individual in a special position facing a large number of students and not allowing interruption, encourage the notion, now happily disappearing, that the lecturer is a different sort of being, an authority, not readily to be questioned. Practical classes should be introduced wherever possible not only as now in science and technology but also in arts and social sciences.

One of the strongest forces preserving out-of-date courses in universities is the examination. The most thoroughgoing believers in the examination system are those who have least faith in the educational process. This is illustrated well by attitudes to the eleven-plus examination and university entrance. The belief was, and still is in some cases, that some quality is being measured which will predict the result of future education. The more accurate the prediction the more fruitless the educational effort. Examinations in universities are thought to be valuable because they give future employers grounds on which they in turn can predict certain kinds of behaviour. Students not only pass or fail, they are classified,

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first class, second class, and so on. A first class degree does tend to ensure a first class job, especially in universities and in the civil service, but it quite clearly does not mark a first class worker in any kind of job. In more technological subjects like medicine the fiction is that passing the examination tells the public that the student is now fit to practise upon them. However, in the past few years we, as the public, have quite rightly been sceptical about this and have required our medical graduates to undertake satisfactorily one year's pre-registration jobs in hospital before they are pronounced competent. Even so we make mistakes and allow into medical practice a number of bad hats and bad doctors, as has been demonstrated recently by disclosures of the sources of drugs in London. Our mistakes, in the other direction, of preventing from practice good people who fail their examinations, we will not be able to scrutinise properly as long as the examination barrier exists.

LAW ON UNIONS IN AUSTRALIA

J. McPhillips

Research Officer, Federated Liquor & Allied Industries Employees' Union of Australia

This article was written for Labour Monthly *before the recent strike action in Australia. The following extract, from a triumphant front-page article in the official paper of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, completes the picture of the nation-wide action against an industrial court ruling and against the entire penal powers.*

The release of Victorian Tram and Bus Union leader Clarrie O'Shea from Pentridge Prison, without him producing union books and accounts before the Industrial Court of Pains and Penalties, was also an historic victory for the Australian trade union movement.

In the greatest confrontation in Australian history between the Australian workers and repressive authority, nearly one million workers, from Fremantle to North Queensland and Adelaide to Darwin, have been on strike.

For nearly one million to stop work in a population of 12 million against industrial penal laws is perhaps a proportion unique in world history.

(*Maritime Worker*, May 26, 1969.)

AUSTRALIAN trade unions are subjected to a substantial degree of 'outside' interference especially by governments, i.e. Commonwealth (national) and state governments. This interference is achieved primarily by means of the legislation covering

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operations of the system of compulsory industrial arbitration which is law in Australia. It extends to wage fixing, the right to strike and the administration of the unions. Wage rates and associated matters, e.g. working hours, leave and working conditions, are determined primarily by means of a system of compulsory arbitration. Departures from this are the exception not the rule. Forms of collective bargaining are crude and even in that form coexist and merge with the compulsory arbitration system.

Access to the arbitration tribunals and consequently to legalised wages is available only to organisations which become registered, a process which also subjects the trade unions to extensive control and a range of penalties which can be and are invoked by governments and employers.

Since 1949 the Commonwealth Government has been a main opponent of every major wage claim advanced by the unions, and in this role it has been of invaluable assistance to the employers. Its intervention has been masked as 'in the public interest' and, only for the purpose of placing before the arbitrators data and views on the nation's economy. Following recent changes in forms and methods of wage assessment by the main wage-fixing authority—the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission—there is a general review of weekly wage rates annually, and in addition wage rates are subject to periodic and infrequent review in accordance with what is termed 'work-value'. This is a measure of such factors as skill, responsibility and the circumstances in which the work is performed. It is primarily aimed at favouring the highly skilled at the expense of all other sections of the work force.

The first exercise following this re-establishment of 'work-value' as one of the two measures for wage assessment took place in 1966 and 1967 and concerned several unions and almost 250,000 workers in the metal industry. Although the Commonwealth Government was not directly involved as an employer of metal workers in this wage contest, it actively intervened and was prominent in every phase of the proceedings. The outcome of this wage issue was a substantial increase ($A7.40) for tradesmen who constitute a minority of the metal workers, and very paltry increases—as low as $A1.00—for non-tradesmen.

Having been almost lyrical in praise of the value of the work of tradesmen, the tribunal which decided on the increases virtually urged employers to off-set them against existing 'extra' payment being made. Such 'extra' payments are a feature of wages in the metal industry and have been wrung from employers by a variety

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of direct actions by the metal workers themselves. By this decision the arbitration authority sought to establish the efficacy of 'work-value' as a measure in wage assessment, to increase official wage rates without increasing actual take-home pay, and to divide the ranks of the workers. Workers saw through this swindle, let loose the most extensive wave of strikes since the immediate postwar years, and forced payment of the increases without any off-setting.

In addition to this intervention, the governments have provided employers with a series of actions by means of which they can have the unions penalised by the arbitration authorities. In the sphere of the Commonwealth a special tribunal has been created for the purpose. It is known to workers by a variety of titles, including 'The Court of Pains and Penalties' and 'The Hangman's Court'. Penalties can be and are imposed for any and every form of direct action to which workers resort to enforce their economic demands or to resist injustice. These include fines on unions, on officials, on individual unionists and jail sentences of varying duration. The industrial legislation does not stand alone as a power to suppress strikes and other forms of direct action, but it is the easiest for the employers to use and is most frequently resorted to. Some idea of the extent of its use and its class bias can be obtained from the following facts which refer only to the Commonwealth sphere.

Between 1956 and 1968 thirty unions were fined upon 799 occasions, a total of $A282,410. The process of imposing these fines involves a legal procedure in which employers are invariably represented by counsel, and frequently the unions are obliged to do likewise although the procedure amounts to little more than a routine with a guaranteed outcome.

Almost without exception the unions are ordered to pay employers' legal costs and this, plus their own legal costs, boosts the weight of the penalty. It is reliably estimated that the total of fines and costs extracted from union funds between 1956 and 1968 by use of these penal powers was $A700,000. Against this, and in the same period, employers were fined a total of a mere $A2,514 upon 153 occasions for breaches of wage awards (contracts).

In 1968 the metal unions were obliged to resort to a series of strike actions to defeat the plan initiated by the arbitration authorities to off-set wage increases against existing 'extra' wage rates. They succeeded in doing this, but in the process were fined $A83,000 and ordered to pay legal costs equalling approximately the same amount.

The government tram and bus workers in the State of Victoria

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were fined a total of more than $A8,000 for direct actions concerning the introduction of one-man buses and one of their number who 'scabbed'. They had the support of the arbitrator on the first issue, and the employer (the Victorian State Government) was obliged to remove the offending man involved in the second matter.

Eight boilermakers—migrants from England—in the State of Western Australia were fined $A30 each when they walked off a job in protest against a foreman using the tools of trade. They refused to pay the fines and were threatened with jail. On the very eve of the jail threat being implemented, and with the organised trade union movement in the state geared to join battle, the fines were anonymously and mysteriously paid.

Much more could be said but only two points need be noted: 1. These penalties and the whole system of compulsory arbitration are 'in place of strife'; 2. Governments—including Labour governments—use the system to interfere on behalf of employers in the contest between capital and labour. We have not mentioned the interference in the internal affairs of unions but it exists and on an extensive scale.

The existence of penalties and the support of the Government for the employers have not prevented the unions from striking. However, the weight of the fines—$A1,000 a day—obliges the unions to drop many job issues which could be won were it not for the fines.

Recent developments show the unions and workers moving to a position of defiance of the penal powers of the arbitration legislation. Government tram and bus workers, road transport workers and the boilermakers have taken decisions against paying outstanding fines. This stand is finding ready support amongst other workers.

IF . . . BUT . . .

'Australian women workers have won their fight for equal pay. In a ruling yesterday the Federal Arbitration Commission said the pay scales of women doing work of the same nature as men will be increased in stages from 85 per cent of the male rate on October 8 this year, to 100 per cent by January 1972.

'Women's organisations and unions afterwards expressed disappointment at the limited scope of the decision, which covers federal pay awards. Union officials said it would affect only 50,000 women out of 1,200,000.

'Until now most federal and state awards in Australia have contained a 25 per cent differential between male and female rates. The commission said that work essentially or usually performed by women should not be paid for at the same rates as men. The ruling came at the end of a test case hearing lasting several months, brought by the Australian Council of Trade Unions.'

(*Daily Telegraph*, June 6, 1969.)

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BOOKS

Critics of Empire

Bernard Porter

Macmillan, 370 pp., £3 10s.

HOW FAR IS IT POSSIBLE to study the record of imperialism and anti-imperialism in Britain between 1895 and 1914 (the period covered in this book) without a theory of imperialism and with even an initial modest disclaimer of any knowledge what imperialism is?

The author of this valuable and conscientious study of trends and utterances in the controversies of the period believes that it is possible. He says: 'What imperialism is or was is not our concern' (p. 3). And again: 'The author has no simple and coherent "theory of imperialism" ' (p. xii).

The result is a curiously restricted focus of observation, but a very exhaustive and fully documented survey of the restricted ground covered. The sub-title of the book, *British Radical Attitudes to Colonialism in Africa 1895-1914*, is more indicative of its contents than the very wide title *Critics of Empire*. The author admits the 'omission' of India (rather a large part of the Empire to omit) as 'hardly treated at all'. He does not even note the omission of Ireland, which was so much the fulcrum of British politics in the period. But in fact the omissions go very much further, and result from the initial refusal to attempt to consider what imperialism 'is or was'.

The period 1895 to 1914 is of profound historical interest in British political development, in which the politics of imperialism dominated every domestic issue, the alignment of parties and the alignments within parties, and all the controversies of the hour. This was the period of the preparation of the first world war, with British imperialism in the key role. The basic conflict of British and German imperialism led to the replacement of the traditional Anglo-French rivalry, which had nearly exploded into war over Fashoda in 1898, by the Entente, and the settlement of the traditional Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia by the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907, providing for the partition of Persia into Northern and Southern spheres of influence, mutual pledges not to colonise Afghanistan, and recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. The landslide defeat of Toryism in the general election of 1906, returning a record 356 parliamentary majority for the Liberal, Labour and Irish Nationalist combination, totalling 513 against 157 Tories, reflected a mass upsurge of anger, stimulated by the Russian revolution of 1905, against the protectionist jingo traditions of Chamberlainism. (The cry of 'Chinese slavery' to describe the plans for the importation of Chinese indentured labour into the South African mines was one of the most successful slogans of the campaign.) But the Liberal Government brought to power on the basis of this rank and file of confused radical anti-imperialist sentiments was controlled by the inner caucus of the Liberal Imperialists, Asquith, Grey and Haldane, who continued and carried forward the Tory imperialist policy of building up the military alliance for the war with Germany, not only without informing the public or parliament, but even concealing from their Cabinet colleagues the secret commitments into which they had entered, and revealing them only at the very moment of the outbreak of war when the die was cast. At the same time the battle over Ireland was carried forward by die-

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hard Toryism and Carsonism to the point of organising for civil war and an army officers' mutiny, which was only interrupted by the outbreak of the major imperialist war.

Of all this fascinating record nothing will be found in this book. It might of course be claimed that by the self-denying limitation announced at the outset this purported survey of 'critics of empire' is in fact confined to 'radical attitudes to colonialism in Africa'; and that therefore the battles which took place over Ireland, India and the Middle East, and that are of vital importance for understanding the role and outlook of the 'critics of empire' during this period, are automatically excluded. A storm of protest arose over the partition of Persia through the Anglo-Russian Treaty; and Browne, the professor of Persian at Cambridge, played a most honourable part in this protest. Theodore Rothstein's *Egypt's Ruin* remains a classic of anti-imperialism produced during this period. James Connolly's *Labour in Irish History*, published in 1910, deepened the whole socialist approach to the understanding of the fight against British colonialism in Ireland.

Thus this artificial fragmentation of anti-imperialist expression and criticism during this period, on the basis of an arbitrary geographical compartment, limits its value as a general survey of 'critics of empire'. But in fact the crucial fields of conflict of the rival imperialist powers in the preparation of the first world war, and the accompanying opposition fight against these policies, were conspicuously centred on Africa. The Agadir crisis of 1911, which nearly brought the outbreak of the European war, and which for the first time revealed the transformation of Lloyd George from the demagogic anti-jingo having to flee in the disguise of a policeman from a mob during the South African war into the ultra-chauvinist official spokesman and sabre-rattler of the Entente, turned on Morocco and the secret clauses of the Anglo-French Entente for the partition of Morocco between France and Spain with the exclusion of Germany. Colonialism in Africa at its most explosive, and giving rise to a storm in British politics. But on all this a discreet silence is maintained. After all, the war of 1914-18 happened outside the chosen period 1895-1914, and therefore the conflict of empires which prepared it during that period is irrelevant, just as the titanic struggle between the rival strategies of Cape-Khartoum-Cairo and Berlin-Byzantium-Baghdad during this period, and the radical opposition to these policies which carried the darkening clouds of approaching world war, falls outside this study of 'British radical attitudes to colonialism in Africa.'

Nevertheless, within these limitations, we have reason to be grateful for the valuable work which is done in this book on the special ground covered. The survey is careful and thorough, with abundant illustrative quotations, of the impact of the 'new imperialism' associated with Chamberlain and the South African war; the mixed strands of opposition, largely ethical or pacifist or old-fashioned liberal; the situation within the Liberal Party and the labour movement; the policies of the colonial reformers, notably the closely linked Fabians and Liberial Imperialists; the role of individuals, E. D. Morel, Mary Kingsley, J. A. Hobson and others. The result is a notable treasurehouse of references, which reveal how much what Lenin called 'the canker of imperialism' had eaten into the working class and liberal-labour movement, whether in the crude economism of many trade union spokesmen, the

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open chauvinism of a Hyndman or a Blatchford, or the shameless theories and sophistries of Fabian Imperialism.

The references to Marx and Lenin are superficial and reveal the conventional misunderstandings. Similarly in the bibliography Marxist work is in general overlooked: although in the text there is recognition of the work of the Social Democratic Federation, of Morris, Belfort Bax and Hyndman in his early days, and of *Justice* and the *Clarion*; among the books Ramsay MacDonald figures with his *Awakening of India* in 1910, but not the pioneer work of the British socialist movement in this field, Hyndman's *Bankruptcy of India*, published in 1886 (true, before 1895, but plenty of key writings before 1895 are included); Theodore Rothstein and Connolly, the ablest representatives of Marxist anti-imperialist theory during this period, are entirely omitted.

In general, a book to be valued for what it does contain, despite its limitations.

R.P.D.

The Road to War: The Origin and Aftermath of the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1967-8

Walter Laqueur

Penguin Books, 456 pp., 8s.

THE STUDENT OF THE NEAR EAST may find this paperback worth the price of 8s. if only for the factual information to be gleaned from the glossary, reports and dates of events. But, for a well balanced interpretation of the events the author records, this book is not an acceptable history.

The author admits his partisanship, the character of which is indicated by his complete dedication to the view that the conflict in the Near East is one entirely between two nationalisms, Jew and Arab, and throughout the book his comments on the historical events he records is based entirely upon this false premise.

Laqueur's stated desire to be considered an accurate historian of the events he records, despite his admitted partisanship, is unacceptable, for he repeats too many Zionist legends as facts, and leaves out many facts too inconvenient for his standpoint to record. For example, he repeats as fact the Zionist legend that the Palestinian Arabs in 1948 rose against the UN Resolution to establish the Israeli state, and received help from other Arab countries. The facts are of course, that in 1948 there were no Arab states *independent* of imperialist rule, and the Palestinian Arabs did *not* militarily resist the formation of Israel. This is testified to by no other than Golda Meir, the present Israeli Prime Minister, who at a press conference held in 1948 said: 'Of the several hundred villages, included within the territory of the proposed UN Arab state only five have agreed to serve as a base for the Arab attackers.' Ben Gurion declared at a Mapai convention on February 7, 1948: 'This war was declared *in opposition* to the desire of the Arab peoples on whose behalf it is allegedly being waged, and despite overwhelming pressure the majority of the Arab peoples of Palestine refuse to take any part in the war.' Laqueur must be aware that the resistance to the formation of an Israeli state came from the imperialists, predominantly British, who financed, armed and officered an army composed, indeed, of Arabs. Although Laqueur records this fact in a single sentence, he continues to regard the resistance as an Arab army of resistance and not a British one. This British-financed army was no more an army of the non-existent Arab states, than a British army of Gurkhas in India was an Indian army of non-independent India.

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The author conveniently represses the important fact that the arms by which the Israelis gained their victory in 1948 came from Czechoslovakia and socialist sources, and that it was mainly due to the work of the Soviet Union in foiling imperialist plans on Palestine that Israel came into existence.

The author's chapter on 'The Aftermath' is peppered with common sense and some truth, but nevertheless is a hotch-potch of conjecture, opinion and speculation reminiscent of the pundits of the Sunday press. It is unconnected with a serious scientific appraisal arising out of the world crisis of imperialism, which in view of his premise of a struggle between two nationalisms could not be otherwise.

The most useful part of Laqueur's book is the one third of it devoted to 'Appendices' which contains a chronology of events leading up to the six days' war, speeches by Nasser and Eban, and UN documentation. My objection to this part of his book is not what he puts in but what he leaves out, such as some important Soviet statements.

Laqueur's book proves one thing at least, which is that no person infected by Zionism, however mildly, can be expected to write a serious history of the Near East covering a period from about 1872 (or the time of Herzl) until the present day. That history has still to be written.

SID DOUGLAS

Japan Surges Ahead

P. B. Stone

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 206 pp., 45s.

ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT and interesting developments in the world today is the remarkable economic growth recorded in Japan.

By the time of Japan's surrender in 1945 the volume of her industrial production was less than 30 per cent of her 1936 output. In sixty cities subject to air attack half the houses were razed to the ground. Tokyo itself was three quarters destroyed. The Japanese Navy and most of her merchant marine was at the bottom of the sea. Foreign trade and exports were at a standstill. Wartime inflation had mopped up private savings. Japan seemed down and out.

Today, Japan stands second only to the United States in the capitalist world in gross national product, having now surpassed West Germany. Her growth rates have been phenomenal. From 1950 onwards it began to average 10 per cent per annum. In 1959 it even reached the staggering figure of 17.9 per cent. From 1956 onwards gross domestic investment averaged between 30 and 40 per cent of gross national expenditure. Real income per head doubled in 1954-62.

Japan is now number one in shipbuilding, builds the largest ships in the world, and will soon be building more ships than the rest of the world put together. She is also one of the world's largest shipping nations. In steel production Japan's output per head has already exceeded that of Britain, her total output is rising slightly faster than that of the Soviet Union, she is the world's largest exporter of steel, and her plans are for 70 million tons of steel production per year, which will put her level with West Germany in per capita consumption. She is number two for cars and number one for the manufacture of bicycles and motor cycles. For the vital petro-chemicals industry production between 1960 and 1965 rose sixfold! In transistors and cameras her leading position is commonly acknowledged; and now she is entering the field of integrated circuits (ICs—a method by which up to 270 transistors can be built from one chip

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of silicone as small as a clipping from a baby's finger nail. The saving on mass is obvious).

All this is remarkable enough. But when one considers that Japan has no iron ore, practically no coking coal, has to import all her phosphate rock for fertiliser, all her salt and sulphur, and her crude oil, the achievement seems even more remarkable.

Understandably it should prompt the questions. How? Why? And what next?

In his book Peter Stone presents a highly readable account of Japan's economic rebirth, and attempts some analysis of the reasons. This book, although it contains a certain amount of useful statistical material, is in no sense a comprehensive economic study of modern Japan. Rather it is a popular account of Japan's technological surge forward (and for this reviewer, much of the technological material is fascinating), backed by some essential economic facts to help the reader gain an idea of the extent of Japan's economic growth.

Some indications are given as to the reasons for this surge forward. Among those given are the pumping in of US funds, especially after the start of the Korean war; and the fact that Japan spends 17 per cent more of her national income on productive investment than Britain does 'because her defence expenditure is one sixth the size' of ours.

Two other reasons seem to me worth considering. One is the deathblow given to feudalism in Japan after the war. The land reform broke up the old landlord system, opened the way to capitalist development on the land on a big scale, and released new resources and labour power. The percentage of people employed in agriculture and fishing dropped from 44.6 per cent in 1950 to 23 per cent in 1967, and is still dropping. The working class rose from 14 million (38.5 per cent) in 1950, to 27 million (57 per cent) in 1965. Mr. Stone puts the figure today at 50 million.

The other factor that impresses one in reading Mr. Stone's book is the extraordinary spirit of initiative, ruthlessness, drive and ingenuity of the big monopolies which are the main beneficiaries of Japan's growth. One cannot help comparing them with British monopolists, who certainly are not behind those of Japan when it comes to exploiting the workers, whether those of Britain or of the rest of the capitalist world where she invests.

What of the future? Can Japan maintain her extraordinary rate of growth? There are no significant signs yet of any slowdown, and Japan's plans, including those to raise her steel output to 70 million tons a year, show the confidence with which the Japanese monopolies are looking ahead. The Japanese working class, 50 million strong, with a Communist Party of 300,000 members, a daily circulation for its paper of 400,000, mass support shown in elections, and the recent united front agreements reached with the Socialist Party, with the support of the Japanese Council of Trade Unions (Sohyo)—these are the forces which the monopolies now face.

Certainly the workers are not opposed to economic growth. They have gained considerably in this postwar period—but they have had to fight for it.

In the present period they are stepping up their struggle not only for more concessions from the big monopolies, but to break the alliance with US imperialism and to work for profound democratic transformations in the entire economic and social structure.

JACK WODDIS

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